

About Your Schools...

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Destreaming

*Information for
Parents and Students*



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Ontario

Ministry of Education
and Training

In recent years, Grade 9 in Ontario schools has marked the start of *streaming*. Streaming means that students have to choose courses at different levels of difficulty – basic, general, or advanced.

Removing the levels of difficulty for Grade 9 students, or *destreaming*, postpones the practice of streaming until students have completed their first year of high school. The Ministry of Education and Training believes that destreaming Grade 9 will benefit all students.

Some secondary schools have already offered a destreamed Grade 9 in the 1992-93 school year. All schools are expected to offer a destreamed Grade 9 by September 1993.

The Grade 9 program is part of the new curriculum described in the Ministry of Education and Training curriculum guide, *The Common Curriculum, Grades 1-9*. This curriculum reflects Ontario's new approach to the setting of high expectations for all students. With a destreamed Grade 9, all students will meet the same high standards at the start of their high school career. A destreamed Grade 9 will

provide more opportunities and greater educational challenges for all students and will enable them to learn from and study with classmates who have a wide range of abilities and interests.

Destreaming Grade 9 gives students a year to get used to high school. It gives them more time to think about what they want to do and to discover their talents and interests. Students will also have more time to learn to deal with the intellectual, emotional, and physical changes of their adolescent years before making important choices about their education.

Fairness is another good reason to destream Grade 9. Basic level courses are for students who plan to go into the work force after high school. Yet researchers have found that many students find themselves in basic level courses for other reasons such as low self-esteem or lack of confidence. As well, students from poor families or racial minorities are more likely to end up in basic level courses than students from other backgrounds.

Students with questions about destreaming should talk to their teacher or guidance counsellor. Parents or guardians should contact their children's teacher or school principal.

For further information, please contact the nearest regional office of the Ministry of Education and Training.

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This brochure is one of a series of publications from the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training to help Ontario residents understand changes to our elementary and secondary education system. The series is called *About Your Schools*.